

# **SUPPORTIVE HOUSING FOR PERSONS EXPERIENCING CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS WORKING GROUP**

## **Meeting 4: Interagency Decision Making Process and Criteria for Funding**

### **MEETING SUMMARY**

#### **Welcome, Introductions and Overview**

Commissioner Marx, Assistant Commissioner Gomez and Commissioner Fabian thanked members and stakeholders for attending the meeting during National Homeless Awareness Week. Commissioner Marx reviewed the planned meeting agenda to discuss funding strategies of each department, the interagency decision-making process, and the draft outline of the report.

#### **Update on Housing and Service Funding Strategies**

##### Department of Human Services:

Assistant Commissioner Gomez stated that the Department of Human Services (DHS) is concentrating on a broad array of services and programs, looking at possible changes in funding priorities, services and programs that could be directed to certain populations.

In supportive housing projects, there is usually a piece that cannot be funded by any sources that DHS has. It would be useful to have flexible funds. This is a big challenge. Our programs are extremely categorical and all kinds of legal requirements are attached to them. We think we can find some limited amounts of funds that could at least be in a pool to provide flexible, wraparound opportunities.

Strategies may include: promoting best practices to the counties; funding for permanent supportive housing for Rule 36 facilities for people with mental illness; conditional use of the MSA shelter needy provision; broadening the definition of housing with services in GRH that addresses chronic homelessness to provide income to an individual; convert some housing subsidies that are now a part of the monies that go to the mental health initiative (\$1,330,000) to support and target homeless people; target PATH (\$460,000 state dollars) to chronic homeless in Clay, Hennepin, St. Louis, and Ramsey counties; looking at Safe Haven programs; reviewing chemical dependency proposals and promulgating Rule 31 to allow case management costs to be eligible for payment under the program; employment services for MFIP families; work with counties on child protection; and add new resources to support SSI eligibility efforts.

### Department of Corrections:

Commissioner Fabian stated that the Department of Corrections (DOC) is looking at corrections compliance and what can be done with transition and housing. There is an untapped resource using offenders on their way out of prison on work crews to do maintenance on tax-forfeited properties or building prefabricated homes.

### Minnesota Housing Finance Agency:

Commissioner Marx introduced potential strategies including setting priorities for the awarding of capital funding; creating a threshold service funding plan; leveraging other funding; assessing the costs of program space and unit size; and looking at accessing agency resources in order to provide operating cost subsidies. The Minnesota Housing Finance Agency (MHFA) is prepared on a short-term basis to get as many units out providing housing for long-term homeless as possible. We are looking at this as an opportunity to sit down with federal programs with the goal of ending long-term homelessness as well and say where we need help. We are prepared to put resources (capital and operating) on the table, but cannot fund over long-term, need to see everyone involved over the long-term.

### **Interagency Decision Making Process**

Commissioner Gomez reviewed potential decision-making processes in terms of funding of supportive housing and also in terms of a process for input into policy and advice necessary throughout life of these projects.

### **Discussion on Draft Outline of Report**

Members reviewed a draft of the report outline. Members and stakeholders were encouraged to submit additions to the outline, comments, and questions to Cherie Shoquist at MHFA, Janel Bush at DHS and Bill Donnay at DOC.

### **Discussion of Follow Up on Strategies for the Next Meeting**

Commissioner Marx ended by stating that this will be a busy month as we proceed to draft the report, please contact us with your comments on the report. Thank you for your participation.